

**Standard 8-3:** The student will demonstrate an understanding of the American Civil War—its causes and effects and the major events that occurred during that time.

**8-3.4** Compare the attitudes of the unionists, cooperationists, and secessionists in South Carolina and summarize the reasons that the members of the South Carolina secession convention in 1860 voted unanimously to secede from the Union, including concerns about states' rights and fears about abolition. (H, P, G, E)

**Taxonomy Level:** B 2 Understand / Conceptual Knowledge

**Previous/future knowledge:**

In the 3rd grade, students explained (3-4.3) the reasons for South Carolina's secession from the Union, including the abolitionist movement, states' rights, and the desire to defend South Carolina's way of life.

In the 4th grade, students summarized the roles and accomplishments of the leaders of the abolitionist movement and the Underground Railroad before and during the Civil War, including those of Harriet Tubman, John Brown, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Sojourner Truth, and William Lloyd Garrison (4-6.2). Also, students explained how specific events and issues led to the Civil War, including the sectionalism fueled by issues of slavery in the territories, states' rights, the election of 1860, and secession (4-6.3).

In 11<sup>th</sup> grade United States history, students will explain how the political events and issues that divided the nation led to civil war, including the compromises reached to maintain the balance of free and slave states, the successes and failures of the abolitionist movement, the conflicting views on states' rights and federal authority, the emergence of the Republican Party and its win in 1860, and the formation of the Confederate States of America (USHC 4.2).

**It is essential for students to know:**

Members of the South Carolina secession convention in 1860 voted unanimously to secede from the Union. However, there were South Carolinians who strongly discouraged secession prior to the election of 1860. **Unionists** favored the idea of remaining part of the Union. Although Unionists did not necessarily agree with the actions of the Northern states or the federal government, they believed that the United States Constitution was well-equipped to protect South Carolina's way of life. **Cooperationists** were South Carolinians who favored seceding from the Union. However, this was a last resort and only if it was done with the support of all of the southern states. They believed that it would be a big mistake for South Carolina to secede without the cooperation and support of other southern states. On the other hand, **secessionists**, also known as radicals or fire-eaters, argued that breaking apart from the Union prior to the Civil War was the only answer for South Carolina. They believed that the issue was not debatable and were ready to secede as early as 1852. It was the events of the 1850s and the election of Lincoln that convinced most South Carolinians to support the position of the fire-eaters.

When it became clear that Lincoln was to be the 16<sup>th</sup> president of the United States, the leaders of South Carolina carried through with their threat to secede. The South Carolina legislature issued a call for a convention to determine the relationship between South Carolina and the Union. Before the convention, communities throughout the state held meetings to discuss the issue. The convention met at the First Baptist Church in Columbia but they quickly adjourned and moved to Charleston because of rumors of a smallpox outbreak. When the meeting reconvened the leaders unanimously adopted an Ordinance of Secession. This political statement said that the federal government should not interfere with the decision making and freedoms of the individual states (**states' rights**). Because Lincoln was a Republican and therefore opposed to slavery in the territories, many Southerners assumed that the federal government would soon make slavery illegal. Ending slavery would, in turn, end southern wealth, political influence

and way of life. Without waiting for Lincoln to be inaugurated, South Carolina and other southern states seceded from the union to protect the institution of slavery and the Southern way of life.

**It is not essential for students to know:**

Students do not need to know the individual leaders of each group or movement. Nor is it essential for students to know the exact date of the Articles of Secession.

**Assessment guidelines:**

Appropriate assessment would require students to **compare** the attitudes of the unionists, cooperationists, and secessionists in South Carolina and summarize the reasons that the members of the South Carolina secession convention voted unanimously in 1860 to secede from the Union. Appropriate assessment should require students to **identify examples** of concerns about states' rights and fears about abolition.